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ABSTRACT

The push to eradicate illiteracy in Turkey was started in the early days of the Turkish Republic and has continued to the present, according to this report. The policies followed to increase the level of literacy in Turkey have differed from one time to another, and some of the measures that were taken became subjects of political controversy. The literacy figures given are based on census data taken by primary teachers in rural villages and small settlements where illiteracy is a problem. The political background and early efforts on literacy training--nation schools, literacy classrooms, the outcomes of literacy courses, some conclusions about the literacy campaigns, the literacy classrooms at the present and their problems--are sketched. The approaches used in literacy training are described in 3 sections (1) early literacy training efforts, including the adoption of the Latin Alphabet; (2) the institutions involved--people houses and people rooms (1932-51), people education centers and reading rooms, and other programs, for example, literacy training in the Army, 4-H clubs, agriculture extension courses, health education programs, home economics programs, and mobil courses for village boys and girls; and (3) the present plans for literacy training through primary education--the problems of expansion, the policies followed to solve the problems, and the planned targets for primary education. Overall results of the efforts on literacy training are discussed, and data showing differences in literacy rate by sex and age group are presented. (FF)

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# THE EFFORTS ON THE ERADICATION OF ILLITERACY IN TURKEY

By

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Prepared for
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EFFORTS ON THE ERADICATION OF ILLITERACY IN TURKEY

> "The basic principle of educational policy we will pursue is first to eradicate illiteracy. The realization of this objective will be a blessed stepping-stone or turning point in the development of our education."
>
> ATATURK, in 1922

A. INTRODUCTION

The efforts on the eradication of illiteracy started in the early days of the Turkish Republic, have continued through the years to the present. However, the policies followed to increase the level of literacy and the measures taken have differed from one time to another. Some of the measures taken became subject of political controversy. At the beginning of this paper, a brief political background is given.

Illiteracy problem of Turkey is mostly a rural problem. Rural communities consist of villages and small settlements which are scattered all over the country. In general, to be able to provide a literacy program for a village community, there must be a primary school with a teacher in that community. Or there must be a vocational course opened whose teacher may also bring in literacy training. A village reading room (small education center with a library) may or may not involve directly in literacy training but provides reading materials. All these go together, and contribute to the increase in literacy rate or level. Because of the interdependencies and interrelationships among the activities in this paper,

first the efforts on providing literacy training for adults are explained, efforts on some adult education activities related to literacy training are summarized and the efforts on the expansion of primary education are also included.

Literacy figures given in this paper are based on census data. A person who tells the census taker he knows how to read and write is considered as literate. When the census taker is not convinced, he may ask further questions to determine whether the person really knows how to read and write or not. In the villages, usually the primary school teachers are used as census takers. They supposedly know who in the village can read and write. These are the only controls (!) on the reliability of the data collected. If we assume that this data is reliable, by definition, it includes the people who only know the mechanics of reading and writing as literates. Such a definition of literacy is far below the UNESCO's "functional literacy" definition.

B. POLITICAL BACKGROUND

From the proclamation of the Republic (1923) to 1946 Turkey had governed by a single political party (Republican People's Party) and its parliament. The early years of the Republic are chiefly characterized by the endeavours to establish the foundations of a "modern", "westward-oriented" nation on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, and by the efforts to ensure the minimum needs of a population which was ravaged by war and had lost much in regaining its independence.

The problems were so huge and the resources were very limited, but with a great enthusiasm several steps of considerable importance were taken.

In a set of basic measures the Republican People's Party and its founder Ataturk tried to rechannel the loyalty to the political concepts embodied in Islam, secularize it, and convert it into allegiance to Turkish national state. In this connection several reforms are introduced: First the sultanate (1922), later the caliphate (1923) were abolished; religious schools and courts were closed (1924); new political institutions, such as the Republican People's Party, were created and elections were held in 1923 and repeated regularly thereafter; a new constitution was adopted in 1924; a new legal system was adopted in place of the sheriat, the Islamic legal system; in order to develop "modern" and "secular" education, a Ministry of Public Instruction was established in 1924, the school system was greatly changed and expanded; a modified Latin alphabet was adopted (1928) in place of Arabic script by which literacy was greatly facilitated.

Other reforms designed to bring Turkey into conformity with Western standards were the adoption of the international clock and calendar (1925), the conversion to international numerals (1928), the introduction of the metric system (1934). The fez was prohibited (1925) and replaced by a European cap, the wearing of European clothes was encouraged. The emancipation of women was another important element in the reform movement. The 1926 civil code recognized equal rights in marriage, in property-holding, and in the courts; polygamy was made illegal; and women were given voting rights and encouraged to attend schools and universities and to practice professions. Unfortunately, these reforms were directed primarily at the urban population, the impact on the villagers was much less.[1]

Economic development also received attention. Convinced that in order to be strong and truly independent, Turkey had to develop its own economy and reduce its dependence on European capital and entrepreneurship, Ataturk moved promptly to terminate the special privileges accorded to Europeans under the Capitulations and Ottoman Debt.

In 1946, the multi-party system was introduced by the Republican People's Party. After the 1946 elections the Democratic Party was represented in the parliament. Four years later, in 1950, the Democratic Party overwhelmed the Republican People's Party and ended its twenty-seven-year rule.[2]

The Democrats professed somewhat more liberal political and economic views; in their campaign they criticized étatism and expressed a general attitude more sympathetic to private enterprise. They also indicated more interest in rural problems and implied that they would be more tolerant in religious matters. The Democrats received the support of many groups.

The inflationary and unplanned economic policy of the Democrats caused a lot of problems. The borrowing capacity abroad became exhausted and the economic situation deteriorated steadily. The allocation of foreign exchange and other scarce resources by administrative decisions opened the way to extensive bribery and corruption. This coupled with political intervention and favoritism.

Intellectuals and civil servants were further antagonized by the public interest that the Democratic leaders began to show in Islam. Several signs of religious revival led them to charge that the Democratic Party was betraying the secular principles and exploiting religion for political purposes.

Confronted with rising opposition in Parliament, the press, and the universities, the Democratic Party leaders became more adamant in their determination to cling to power and more ruthless in their tactics. The efforts to silence their critics by jail sentences, threats, and, in some cases, attacks increased the opposition among the intellectuals.

In 1960 Democratic Party regime was overthrown by the armed forces.

In 1961 a new constitution was adopted and new elections were held.[3].

The new Constitution made the "planned economic and social development" an imperative by its articles 41 and 192. A fifteen year long-term development plan was prepared (1963-1977) which was divided into three five-year plans.[4].

For the four years following 1961 elections, Turkey was governed by a series of Coalition governments.

In 1965, Justice Party which was founded before the 1961 elections won almost 53% of the vote, and formed the government. Since that time Justice Party has been in power. Recently, for several reasons, the army asked the Prime Minister to resign. Now, a "National Coalition Cabinet" was established "to stop the anarchy" in the country. The Army asked the parliament "to apply the existing reform laws" and "to bring the reforms" which are set by the Constitution, such as "land reform", "education reform", etc.

## C. EFFORTS ON LITERACY TRAINING

### 1. THE EARLY EFFORTS

#### a. General Policies

The leaders of the early Republic had come from a revolution against the foreign forces, the Sultanate and its followers. When they started another revolution against ignorance, backwardness and poverty in the country the forces they had to fight with were not weaker than the forces they fought before. So the methods they used to introduce the reforms also had been affected by the revolutionary principles. When a reform was to be made the basic steps taken to introduce it were as follows: 1. A special law was enacted, 2. the public was prepared to secure its support and to make the tenets of the reform widely known and accepted, 3. the law was applied and the oppositions (if any) eliminated through legal means. In the long run, education was used for the assimilation of the reforms and the "modern" values. A "literate" and "educated" populace was thought as the first requirement of "modernization" and "westernization" towards which all the reforms were directed. Turkey's population was overwhelmingly illiterate (89.4 per cent in 1927) and parallel to the reforms a war had to be declared against illiteracy. That fight started from the very beginning of the Turkish Republic.[5]

Since that time, several efforts have been made to increase the level of literacy in Turkey. There were successes and failures. The results of these efforts have not been studied systematically. The policies are made based on experiences and political preferences. But literacy training and primary education always had a high priority at all times.

b. Adoption of the Latin Alphabet - 1928

Because of its effect on literacy training and on the Turkish culture as a whole it is worthwhile to give some information about the adoption of the Latin alphabet in Turkey.

This was not a new topic for Turkey. There had been proposals for an improvement of the Arabic script since the time of Tanzimat (1876 reorganization) though nothing very much had come of them. The more radical idea of abandoning the Arabic script entirely and replacing it by the Latin alphabet was put forward and discussed in Turkey in 1923 and 1924, but decisively rejected.

The Arabic script was not compatible with the sounds of Turkish language and used to take years for a person to learn. It was believed by Ataturk that if a rapid increase in the literacy rate was desired the Arabic script had to be abolished. By early 1928, "the Kemalist regime was in the saddle"[6]. and the time had come for this action. In a short time the new alphabet was adopted and the same year it was ready for presentation to the nation.

In his speech before the leaders of the Republican Party, Mustafa Kemal said:

> "we must free ourselves from those incomprehensible symbols... You must learn the new Turkish letters quickly. Teach them to your compatriots, to women and to men, to porters and to boatmen. Regard it as a patriotic and national duty... and when you perform that duty, bear in mind that for a nation to consist of 10 or 20 per cent of literates and 80 or 90 per cent of illiterates is shameful..."[7].

After this call a literacy training campaign was organized to teach the new alphabet to the people.

c. The First Literacy Campaign

Ataturk set out on a tour of the country, teaching and examining the populace in villages, squares, schoolrooms, town halls and cafes. The Prime Minister and other leaders followed his example. "Soon all Turkey was a schoolroom, with the nation's intellectuals, armed with blackboards and easels, teaching the people to read and write the new alphabet.

2. THE NATION SCHOOLS AND THE LITERACY CLASSROOMS*

In 1928, at the time of the adoption of the new alphabet, in order "to wipe out illiteracy and to help the Turkish people to acquire necessary knowledge for a better life" the Nation Schools Law was passed by the parliament.[8]

The Nation Schools consisted of reading rooms or classrooms in the village boarding schools. There were two programs. Program A was for the beginners and program B was for those who already knew how to read and write using the new alphabet or the Arabic script. Besides the Nation Schools, temporary literacy courses were held in school buildings, in coffee houses, in private houses, and, where better accommodation was unavailable, outdoors, under a tree or at any convenient corner of the village. The Law required all citizens, male and female alike, between fifteen and forty-five years of age to attend these courses. The people over forty-five could attend if they wished.

*"Nation Schools" is the name of the literacy courses originally used. Later these courses were renamed as "People's Classrooms".

In the first operation year, 1928-29, 20,459 literacy courses were opened, more than one million persons attended, and 597,010 persons (397,476 men, 199,534 women) received certificates.[9]

After six or seven years the Nation Schools and literacy courses lost their effectiveness, especially after compulsory attendance ceased to be enforced. There were only about 5,000 primary schools in the villages during that time and practically it was difficult or impossible to expand the literacy courses to the villages which did not have a primary school. The number of the literacy courses opened gradually dropped as low as 296 in 1939. But the efforts had directed to open primary schools and teacher training institutions. Another effort was made in 1944 with 3129 literacy courses. But this effort also did not continue and the number of courses opened decreased as low as 27 in 1950. Between 1950 and 1960, during Democratic Party government, literacy courses continued but the highest number of courses opened was 2,781 in 1955. That was right after the 1960 Revolution the efforts on literacy courses significantly increased.

A literacy campaign was organized all over Turkey. Many teachers and students joined the campaign voluntarily. The number of the literacy courses opened by the Ministry of Education was 11,864. The courses opened by the volunteers are not included in this figure. The motivation behind these efforts was very simple: It was taught by many people that during 1950-1960 democracy did not work in Turkey mainly because the villagers were mostly illiterate and, for this reason, they were easily exploited by the politicians. So, illiteracy had to be eradicated. The

teachers and the students were highly motivated but the illiterates themselves were not. They didn't think that their main problem was illiteracy. Naturally, the campaign did not continue and the number of courses opened and the emotions of the volunteers gradually decreased. There were only 2,396 literacy courses in 1965. (Figure I).

Literacy training and adult education activities for the village population were considered within the community development concept in the First Five Year Development Plan (1963-1967). There were several pilot projects but they were dropped in the Second Five Year Development Plan (1968-1972).

The Second Five Year Development Plan aims to teach five million persons how to read and write during the plan period:

> "Literacy will be given particular emphasis in these activities and five million citizens will be taught how to read and write during the second plan period in 'literacy mobilization' drive through the joint efforts of public and volunteer organizations. People enrolling in these courses will also receive basic general knowledge."[10].

3. THE OUTCOMES OF LITERACY COURSES

The number of persons receiving certificates from literacy courses are shown in Table I.

Table I

Number of Persons Receiving Certificates From Literacy Courses (1928-1964)

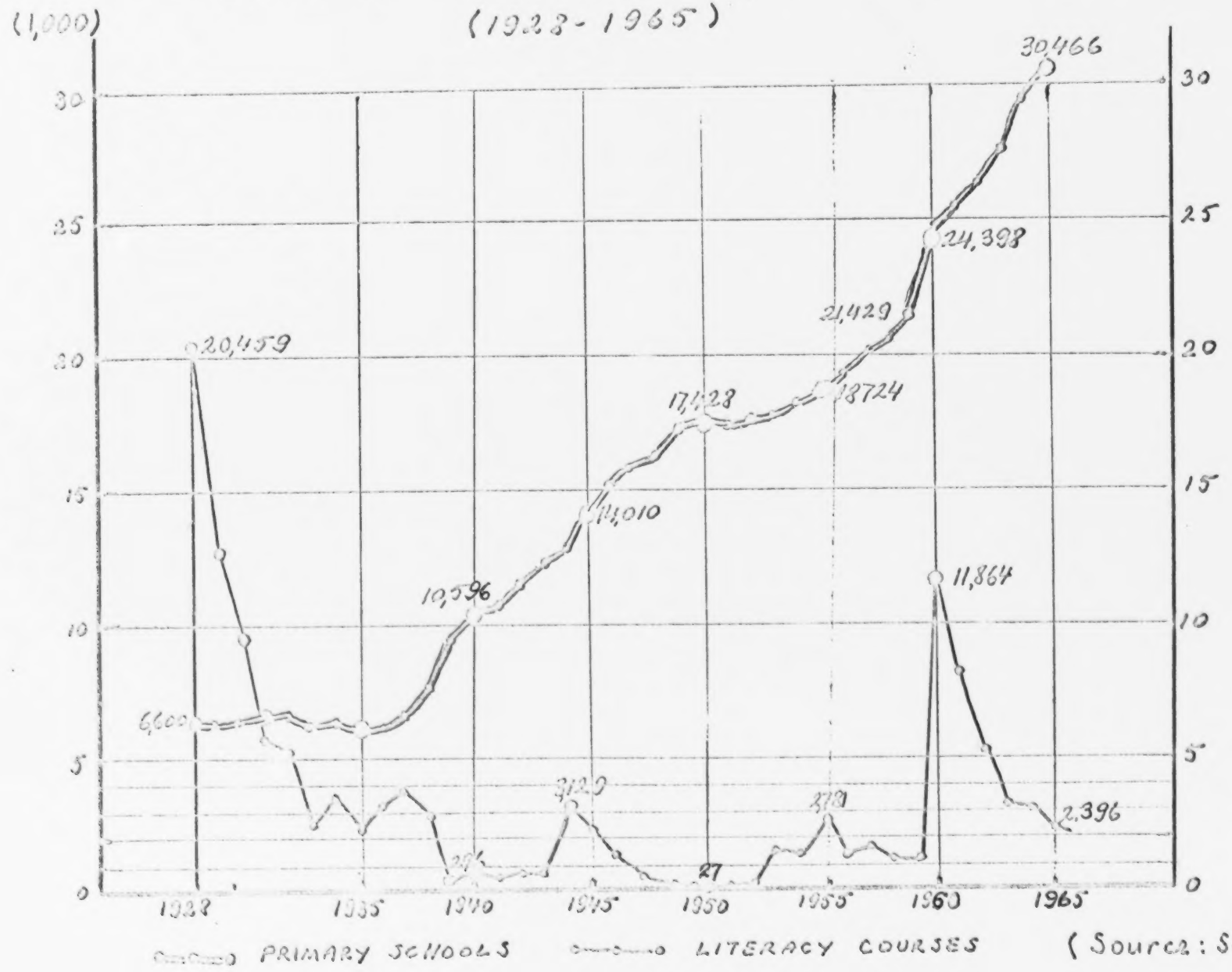
| Time Period | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1928-1929 | 577,731 | 281,702 | 859,433 |
| 1930-1934 | 399,351 | 85,475 | 494,826 |
| 1935-1939 | 187,142 | 29,593 | 216,735 |
| 1940-1944 | 114,617 | 29,232 | 143,849 |
| 1945-1949 | 61,587 | 17,592 | 79,179 |
| 1950-1954 | 37,469 | 4,952 | 42,421 |
| 1955-1959 | 66,762 | 10,510 | 77,272 |
| 1960-1964 | 232,502 | 41,362 | 273,864 |

Source: State Statistical Institute, Egitiun Haretetleri.

(Figure II and I)

# TURKEY

## NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND LITERACY COURSES (1923-1965)




(Source: SSI)

Two observations are important in Table I: First the numbers of the persons receiving certificates from literacy courses are very low and, except the 1928-1934 period, their effects on the literacy rate are very small. For example, from 1960 to 1965 the number of literate persons increased from 9.1 million to 12.5 million. The difference is 3.4 million. Only 273,864 of this 3.4 million learned how to read and write through literacy courses, which is only 8% of the increase. It means 92% of the persons who became literate from 1960 to 1965 learned how to read and write through primary education or through other means. The overall contribution of the literacy courses to increase the literacy rate from 1928 to 1965 is 2,187,579 persons. This is 19% of the total increase in the number of literate persons.

The second observation is that the numbers of female population receiving certificate are always much smaller than the numbers for males, although illiteracy rate for females is much higher than the rates for males.

4. SOME CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE LITERACY CAMPAIGNS

As it is already explained the contribution of literacy courses to increase the literacy rate is not high enough. The campaigns during 1928-1930 were successful partly because of the personal involvement of the leaders and partly because of the compulsory nature of the campaign. This campaign did not enter enough into the village population where the illiteracy rate is much higher and the success did not continue. The same thing happened in 1960. Many courses opened with an emotion, then that emotion disappeared.

The literacy campaigns have used an extensive approach; they were

emotionally arranged, often superficial and directed towards people whose motivation was poor (or lacking) and literacy did not have a function in their daily life.

This is the main reason why literacy campaigns were not an on-going success in Turkey as they were in other countries.

As it is suggested by UNESCO, a "selective" approach should be used and first the people who have the motivation should be taught with the aim of "functional literacy."[11].

A carelessly and emotionally organized literacy campaign may produce some literates but, in general, it can cause a negative feeling in the people toward literacy courses. This happened in Turkey during the 1960 campaign.

It seems the Second Five Year Plan misses this point and the target put (5 million) is just unrealistic.

## 5. LITERACY CLASSROOMS AT THE PRESENT AND THEIR PROBLEMS

At the present time there are three types of programs in literacy courses which are renamed as "people's classrooms": Program A is for the beginners and includes reading and writing, basic math and citizenship. Program B is for the persons who know how to read and write. Comprehension, mathematics and citizenship are emphasized in this program. Program C aims to give an education equal to primary education level. These courses are opened where there are ten or more persons who want to attend. The courses continue for four months a year and are held in the late afternoons or evenings. Primary school teachers are used as teachers.

The main problems of the literacy courses are as follows:

1. Although the place, the teacher and the funds are available, it is difficult to attract illiterate persons, especially the females, to the courses.

2. After the courses are opened, in a short time many of them are closed because of the high drop-out rate.

3. The productivity rate in the programs is very low.

4. The persons who learn how to read and write through the literacy courses cannot find reading materials to practice their new skill. They may forget what they learned in a short time.

To be effective illiterate people should be motivated (or their motivation should be found), the teachers should be trained, special teaching methods and teaching materials should be developed and finally, additional reading materials should be provided. In all these activities, "functional literacy" should be the aim.[12].

D. OTHER INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN LITERACY TRAINING

1. PEOPLE HOUSES AND PEOPLE ROOMS, PEOPLE EDUCATION CENTERS AND READING ROOMS

The People Houses (Halkevis) were established in 1932 as community centers providing social amenities and educational facilities of all kinds, free of charge for people of all ages, sexes and social status. The Halkevi has an important place in the history of Turkish adult education. As one foreign writer says, "no impression of Turkish education is adequate without appreciation of Halkevi.'[13].

Halkevi was the large center located in the cities and towns. Halk Odasi was the small center usually with a one all-purpose room and located in villages. Halkevis and Halk Odasis were connected to each other at national and provincial levels but they were administered locally by volunteer local people who were elected for two years.

The activities were organized through several Divisions such as Language and Literature, History-Museum, Library and Publication, Adult Courses, Village Affairs, Social Welfare, etc.

The Language and Literature Division organized programs to combat illiteracy and to encourage reading Turkish literature. The Libraries and Publication Division would provide books and publish reading materials including cultural and news journals. The books, the journals and the other newspapers would be distributed to the People Rooms in the villages. This was a very helpful service in literacy training.

By 1949 there were 476 Halkevis in cities and towns and more than 4,000 Halk Odasis in the villages. But, because of their affiliation with

the Republican People's Party "the Halkevis and Halkodasis were criticized very much by the Democrats and as early as 1951 they all had been closed and their assets confiscated to the Treasury."[14].

As Geoffrey Lewis point out, "this action meant a heavy loss to the Republican People's Party but the cessation of educational, cultural and social work of the Halkevis constituted an even heavier loss to the people at large."[15].

This action taken by the Democratic Party was also criticized very severely. As a result of the pressures, in 1954 People Education Centers were opened in the cities and Reading Rooms in the villages. But they were not able to attract people as Halkevis did.

In 1960, after the revolution, the General Directorate of Adult Education was established in the Ministry of Education to organize literacy training and adult education activities. The number of People's Education Centers and Reading Rooms increased. But for several reasons they are not functional enough in both fields of literacy training and adult education.

2. Literacy Training in the Army

Since 1928, the Turkish army has also been involved in literacy training. Many young boys (20-22 years of age) who went into the army as illiterates returned to their villages as literates. Literacy training has been a traditional activity in the Turkish Army.

Starting in 1959 the Turkish Army established permanent literacy training schools. Every year more than 55,000 illiterate recruits are trained in sixteen such schools.

This program has a captive audience, trained teachers, special

materials and methods. They are not comparable with other programs.[16]

The Army Literacy Training Program is successful but one should remember that only the boys have received this training. Unfortunately the illiterate Turkish girls do not have this kind of opportunity.

3. OTHER COURSES

Besides these two major literacy training programs there are several other means used to teach young people and adults how to read and write. 4-H clubs, agriculture extension courses, health education programs, home economics programs, mobil courses for village boys and girls, and several other programs also include literacy training when the audience is illiterate. To teach reading and writing in these programs seems more effective than previously mentioned literacy programs. Unfortunately the number of the illiterate persons covered by these type of courses are not great.

The Ministry of the Interior has literacy programs in prisons, the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Industry also are involved in literacy training of the workers.

There are locally-organized adult education programs by local governments, municipalities or voluntary organizations and associations which also are involved in literacy training as marginal activities. There are courses locally organized for the persons who want to get a primary school diploma to prepare them for the primary certification exams. All these activities are encouraged by the Directorate of Adult Education in the provinces through Adult Education Centers. The number of persons who learned how to read and write through these means is not known.

## E. LITERACY TRAINING THROUGH PRIMARY EDUCATION

Primary education has been the most effective means to increase the rate and the level of literacy in Turkey. One observes that from the very beginning of the Republic, several attempts have been made to expand and improve primary school facilities with the aim of increasing the rate and the level of literacy in the country. Primary education always had a priority in the educational policies followed.

Among the measures taken during the early years was the abolition of different types of schools and replacing them with modern schools with a standard school year and standard curriculum. Through legislative acts various attempts have been made to build and improve primary school buildings, to finance schools, to improve curriculum, to supply teachers and to ensure attendance.

Until 1939 compulsory education was three years in villages and five years in towns and cities. In 1939 the duration was raised to five years in villages too. Today compulsory school attendance age is 7-14.

### 1. THE PROBLEMS OF EXPANSION CONFRONTED

#### a. Small Settlements

From the very beginning the huge number of small settlements has created a primary problem. The places inhabited by rural population which constitutes the 70% of the total population, contain 65,277 settlement units. 35,441 of these settlements are villages and 29,836 of them are farms, neighbourhoods, out-posts, nomad camping sites, etc.[17]. Many of the settlements in the second category are not big enough to build a school. Nomad communities move seasonally which creates a different kind of problem.

b. Population Growth

Because of improved health conditions, the rate of population growth has increased through the years. During the periods 1950-1955, 1955-1960 and 1960-1965 the rates of growth were 27.7, 28.5 and 26.1 per thousand, respectively.[18]. The high rate of population growth has added additional problems to the efforts on the expansion of primary education. To keep pace with it has been a problem itself. (Figure: VII)

c. Other Problems

The other problems had been lack of school buildings, lack of teachers, shortage of financial resources and a lack of interest in school and education on the part of the villagers (and now a high social demand for education).

2. THE POLICIES FOLLOWED AS SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS

a. The Type of Schools

The problem of small settlements necessitated the creation of different type of primary schools in Turkey. They are as follows:

- Day Primary Schools: Because of the characteristics of settlements in rural areas, different types of schools were created. The usual type for primary school in the towns and cities were five year schools with five or more classrooms taught by five or more teachers. Some of the big villages also had this type of school but some had five year schools with one or more classrooms taught by one, two or three teachers and some of them had three year schools taught by one teacher. The number of students determined the number of the classrooms and the teachers. After 1939 all

the primary schools became five year schools. Still there are primary schools in villages with one, two, three or four teachers as well as complete schools with five or more classrooms each taught by one teacher.

- Boarding Schools: In the early years many of the village schools were boarding schools located in a central village and served to several nearby villages. When schools were built in the nearby villages too, the original boarding schools were converted to day schools. Later, a different type of boarding school was established. The main purpose of this school is to provide schooling and to meet the demand for villages whose population is not large enough to establish an individual school. They are boarding schools and free for the students. A three year middle school is also added to this school and successful students are kept after primary education. There are 56 of them at the present. There will be 71 by 1972.[19].

- Mobil Schools and Itinerant Teaching: This type of school is being developed for the sections of the country with scarce population. They are particularly significant for rural families who move seasonally and for very small villages in which no more than five or ten school-age children may be found. In relation to the seasonally changing families, the mobil school with its teacher and equipment moves along with the families who form a kind of community. In the itinerant teaching program, a teacher is assigned to several villages.

b. Supply of Teachers

Lack of teachers was a serious problem. As the number of schools increased and primary education has been expanded, the need for teachers has

also increased. Not only the newly opened schools, the previously opened schools also needed additional teachers due to the increased student population. High population growth added to the problem. The following sentence is quoted from the Second Five Year Development Plan to illustrate the nature of the problem:

"There has been a 30 per cent increase in village primary school teachers during the 1960-1965 period, the student-teacher proportion has increased from 46 to 48. In the cities, this proportion has increased from 41 to 45 as compared to a 40 per cent increase in teachers."[20].

In 1927 there were 15,194 primary school teachers working in 6,043 schools. In 1965 there were 85,653 primary teachers working in 30,466 primary schools. (Table II). (Also Figure II and III.)

Table II

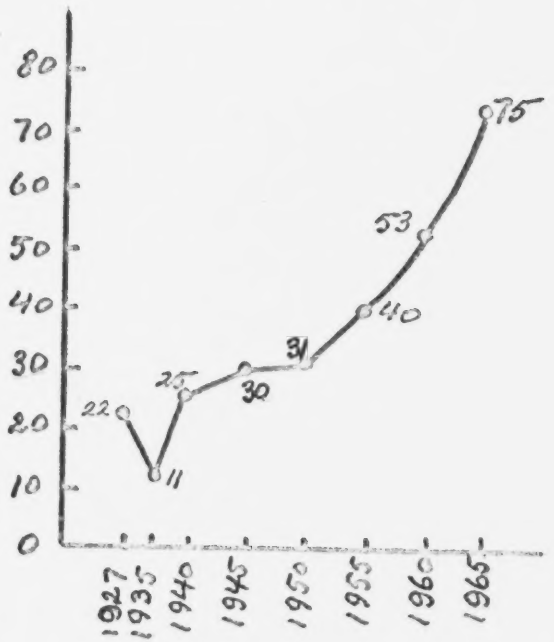
Number of Primary Schools (1), Primary Teachers (2), Normal Schools (3) and Normal School Graduates (1927-1965)

| Years | Number of Schools | Number of Teachers | Number of Normal Schools | Number of Normal School Graduates |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1927 | 6,043 | 15,194 | 22 | 640 |
| 1935 | 6,275 | 14,949 | 11 | 741 |
| 1940 | 10,596 | 20,564 | 25 | 920 |
| 1945 | 14,010 | 27,317 | 30 | 2,095 |
| 1950 | 17,423 | 35,871 | 31 | 2,472 |
| 1955 | 18,724 | 42,169 | 40 | 2,957 |
| 1960 | 24,398 | 62,526 | 53 | 4,362 |
| 1965 | 30,466 | 85,653 | 75 | 8,443 |

Source: State Statistical Institute

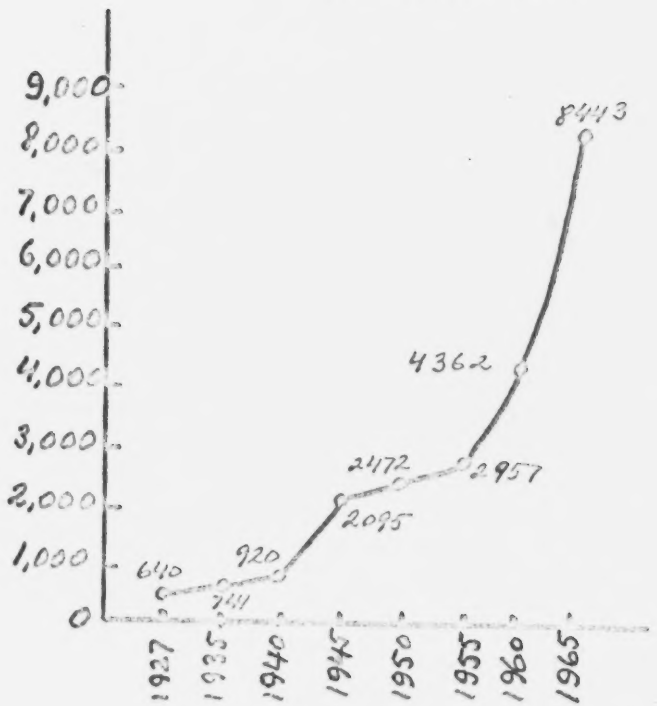
# TURKEY
## (1927 - 1965)
## NORMAL SCHOOLS

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS




(FIGURE II)

NUMBER OF GRADUATES




(FIGURE III)

(Source: SSI)

Several steps were taken to increase the number of teachers parallel to the increase in the number of students and the schools.

- Normal Schools: Normal schools have been the major source to train primary teachers. There are two types: 1. six year boarding schools after primary education, and 2. three year boarding or day (or mixed) schools after three year middle school. There are 75 normal schools in Turkey at the present. (Figure II). Recently, duration in these has been extended one more year.

As Table II indicates, the number of yearly graduates of normal schools has increased from 640 in 1927 to 8,443 in 1965. As is illustrated by Figure II, there are three significant rises: 1. between 1940-1945 (as a result of "village Institutes" which will be explained later), 2. between 1955-1960, and 3. between 1960-1965. The highest increase was between 1960-1965 (from 4,362 to 8,443).

Three different experiments in teacher training in addition to normal schools are unique. They are explained briefly in the following.

- Village Instructors Training Camps: In 1935, the Ministry of Education, after studying the problems concerning rural education, decided to provide all the villages with teachers in asshort a time as possible by using practical methods and at as little cost as possible. The solution was found to be in employing the military reserve sergeants in villages as teachers. For this purpose a training camp was started in 1936. At the camp, they were trained in four areas: academic, professional, agricultural, and the construction of school buildings. Books for the use of rural primary schools were written to supply the material in new curriculums, and to train the sergeants in their new duties.

The experiment gave good results and training camps of this type were opened in other regions. The sergeants had teaching experience in the army, agricultural experience in the field (they were villagers), and they were close to the peasants. However, they had poor training. Later a modified plan was put into practice. But this approach could not be a permanent way of teacher supply. Finally, in 1938 the practice was dropped. Today we still have more than two thousand instructors of this type remaining.[20].

- Village Institutes: The Village Institutes were established in 1938 as an extension of the above mentioned experience. The objectives were as follows:

a. to train village teachers from village children and to keep them in the village;

b. to train prospective village teachers in agriculture and industrial arts, in addition to general and professional training and community development;

c. to train village public service people such as village health officers, village mid-wives, and village leaders.[22].

There were twenty-one village institutes in Turkey in 1948 with more than 15,000 pupils.[23].

The village institutes became a subject of political controversy like Halkevis. They were much criticized and at different times accused of "inefficiency", of "leftism" etc., and subjected to changes which modified their character very considerably.[24]. For several reasons,

mostly political, they were closed in 1954 and converted into regular training schools.[25].

- Teachers From Army Draftees

After 1960, another short term solution found to the problem of teachers shortage was to use army draftees with at least a high school education in teaching in place of compulsory army service for two years.

The qualified draftees had been given a choice to teach in a village primary school or to serve in the army. Those draftees who preferred teaching were sent to the provinces. In the provinces, extensive preparation programs were arranged for them by the directorates of Education. Then they were assigned to the schools which usually had an experienced teacher. A continuous help was given to these persons by the inspectors and the professional teachers working with them.

The draftees are encouraged to stay in teaching after their compulsory two year period. Many of them took teacher certification exams in normal schools and stayed in teaching. The approach was successful for that period to satisfy the increased demand for teachers in the villages, but this could not be a permanent way of teacher supply.

This practice was stopped in 1964, except the primary school teachers. Teachers can perform the compulsory army service as teachers in villages or in the Army Literacy Schools.

- The Targets of the Second Five Year Plan

The Second Five Year Development Plan aims to increase the number of total students in normal schools from 47,000 in 1968 to 72,800 in 1972,

first registration from 16,700 in 1968 to 22,800 in 1972, and yearly graduates from 11,600 in 1968 to 18,900 in 1972 as they are shown in Table III. The targets have been applied successfully so far.

Table III

Planned Progress in Normal Schools

| Years | Total Students | First Registration | Graduates |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1968-1969 | 47,900 | 16,700 | 11,600 |
| 1969-1970 | 52,100 | 17,800 | 14,300 |
| 1970-1971 | 57,500 | 18,900 | 15,000 |
| 1971-1972 | 64,700 | 20,600 | 16,700 |
| 1972-1973 | 72,800 | 22,800 | 18,900 |

Source: State Planning Organization, Second Five Year Development Plan.

c. Construction of School Buildings

After 1938, parallel to the efforts on training teachers for village primary schools through village institutes, extensive efforts were made to obtain the participation of local people in the construction of village primary school buildings.

The villagers, who did not have an interest in school, were not cooperative with the government to help with the construction of their own school buildings. The Government often used force to obtain their cooperation. This policy, although increasing the number of school buildings, also caused a negative reaction against the government and the school.

Before and after the 1946 elections the Democrats heavily criticized this policy. During the 1950 campaign they would say to the villagers "to build the school buildings is the government's duty, not yours. We will

build that school for you. If one of the window panes is broken, even that is our job, we will replace it." This policy caused a decrease in the contribution of local resources to village schools in general.

Because of this new policy, the number of new village schools built decreased between 1950 and 1955. But now there was pressure from villagers for more schools. Even many of them were volunteers to provide the plot and stones for the construction. So the number of the village schools built in 1955-1959 period increased to 4,120 buildings as against 1,006 buildings built in the 1950-1955 period.

Right after the 1960 Revolution, No. 222 Primary Education Law was passed. This law set aside 3% of the National budget and 25% of the local budgets for meeting the requirements of compulsory primary education.

When Turkey's First Five Year Development Plan was prepared some changes became necessary in the implementation of this law.

The number of new village primary school buildings built in the period of 1960-1964 was 6,566. (Table IV).

At the present, the cooperation of the villagers to build school buildings is not forced, but encouraged as a policy.

Table IV

Increase in the
Number of Village Primary School Buildings

| Years | Number of Village Primary Schools | Number of New Village Primary Schools Built in Five Years |
|---|---|---|
| 1936 | 4,854 | |
| 1940 | 9,203 | 4,349 |
| 1945 | 12,496 | 3,293 |
| 1950 | 15,800 | 3,304 |
| 1955 | 16,806 | 1,006 |
| 1960 | 20,926 | 4,120 |
| 1965 | 27,492 | 6,566 |

Source: State Statistical Institute

d. Attendance

During the early days, attendance was a real problem. Many parents taught that a religious education given by imam or other persons to teach how to read the Koran was enough for their children. The new school was not the place for them. Some of the parents would not send their children to school because they thought that they needed their children's labor in the field or at home and "the school would not bring them the bread" they needed. Some of the parents would send their boys but not their daughters, because they would think that education was not necessary for their future life. Some would send their daughters for two or three years, then they would think that, it was time to separate the girls from the boys due to the early maturation of the girls... One of these or others or the combination of these made to get the children in the school difficult although the school and the teacher were both provided.

The Republican People's Party took harsh steps on this problem. Since the primary education was compulsory, every parent had to send their children to school. If not, the parents were punished by a fine or even by prison.

This policy increased the rate of attendance but caused a negative feeling towards the government, school and the teacher, who reported the non-attendance to the government.

Today, Turkey has passed this stage; conditions have changed and now the government has difficulty in responding to the social demand for schools and more education. Although we still have some difficulties in some parts of the country with the attendance of the girls, in general "it

has been understood in the villages that a high school or university education is a prerequisite for success in life, and villagers are beginning to demand this level of education."[26].

3. PLANNED TARGETS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION

The First Five Year Development Plan's target on universal primary education was to include the total 7-12 age group children in primary school by 1972 as follows:

| Years: | 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 | 1967 | 1972 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % of children: | 73 | 76 | 80 | 84 | 87 | 100 |

This target has been followed successfully. In 1968-69 the rate was 90%. Today it is about 94% and no doubt it will be 100% in 1972-73 school year.

Now the problem is not with the lack of schools, but with the quality and type of the education provided for the village children by these schools. The Second Five Year Development Plan sets several targets in regard to this problem. The last revision was made in the primary school curriculum in 1968. Still there are controversies on the type of village primary school education.

One of the directions set by the Second Five Year Development Plan about the educational functions of the primary school in regard to whole village community is as follows:

"All primary schools will be developed as educational centers where literacy campaigns are directed, where agricultural publications can

be found and where different educational and cultural activities take place."[27].

This idea of "community schools" is not new for Turkey. Even during the 1920's the village primary schools were intended to be "educational and cultural centers" of the villages. But, with some exceptions, they have never become so.

F. THE OVERALL RESULTS OF THE EFFORTS ON LITERACY TRAINING

That all those efforts mentioned so far have paid off is indicated by the decrease in illiteracy in the population over age six, from 89.4% in 1927 to 51.28% in 1965. (Figure V). It is important to note that illiteracy among females is much higher than among males. According to the 1965 census 67.18% of the females and 35.96% of the males were illiterate. Although there has been a considerable overall decrease in illiteracy in the last forty years, it is interesting to notice that the rate of illiteracy in six years and over age group actually increased 1.4% between 1955 and 1960. (Figure V).

In spite of this overall decrease in the rate of illiteracy the actual number of illiterates has increased with the exception of 1940-1945 and especially the 1960-1965 period. (Figure VI). The number of illiterates for males stays around to 4 to 5 million since 1927, but the number of illiterate females has always kept increasing. It started with 5,361,000 in 1927 and rose to 8,458,000 in 1965, although the rate of illiteracy for females decreased from 95.4% in 1927 to 67.18% in 1965. (Figure V and VI.)

Beside the differences in literacy rates between sexes, there are differences between different age groups. In general, in the lower age groups, a drop is observed in the rate of illiteracy as the difference between sexes decreased. The 14-24 age group is shown as an example in Table V.

Table V.

Ratio of Illiterates in 14-24 Age Group by Sex (1965 Census)

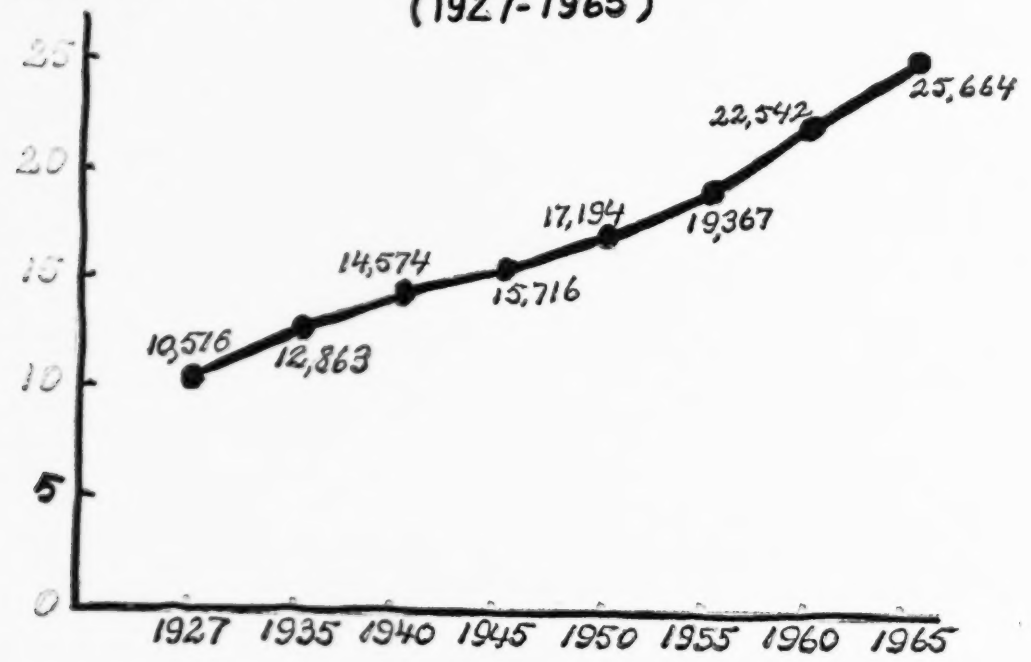
| Age Group | Population | Total Illiterate Population | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total | % | Male | % | Female | % |
| 14-19 | 3,618,724 | 1,186,230 | 32.8 | 367,663 | 30.9 | 818,567 | 69.1 |
| 20-24 | 2,365,696 | 916,231 | 38.7 | 231,045 | 25.5 | 685,186 | 74.8 |
| Total | 5,984,420 | 2,102,461 | 35.1 | 598,708 | 28.5 | 1,503,753 | 71.5 |

Source: State Planning Organization.

(FIGURE VII)

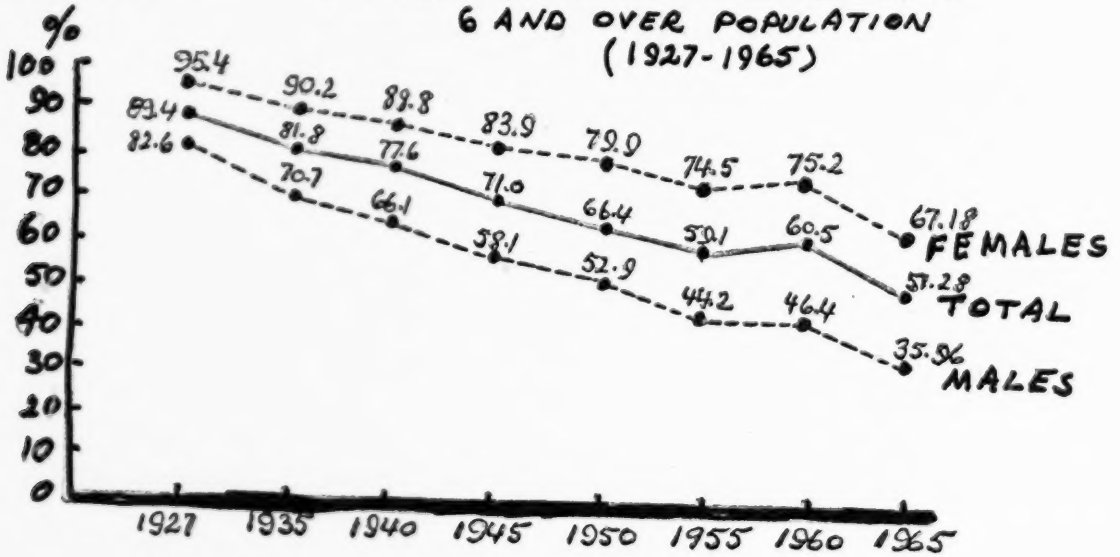
TURKEY

MILLION 6 AND OVER TOTAL POPULATION
(1927-1965)



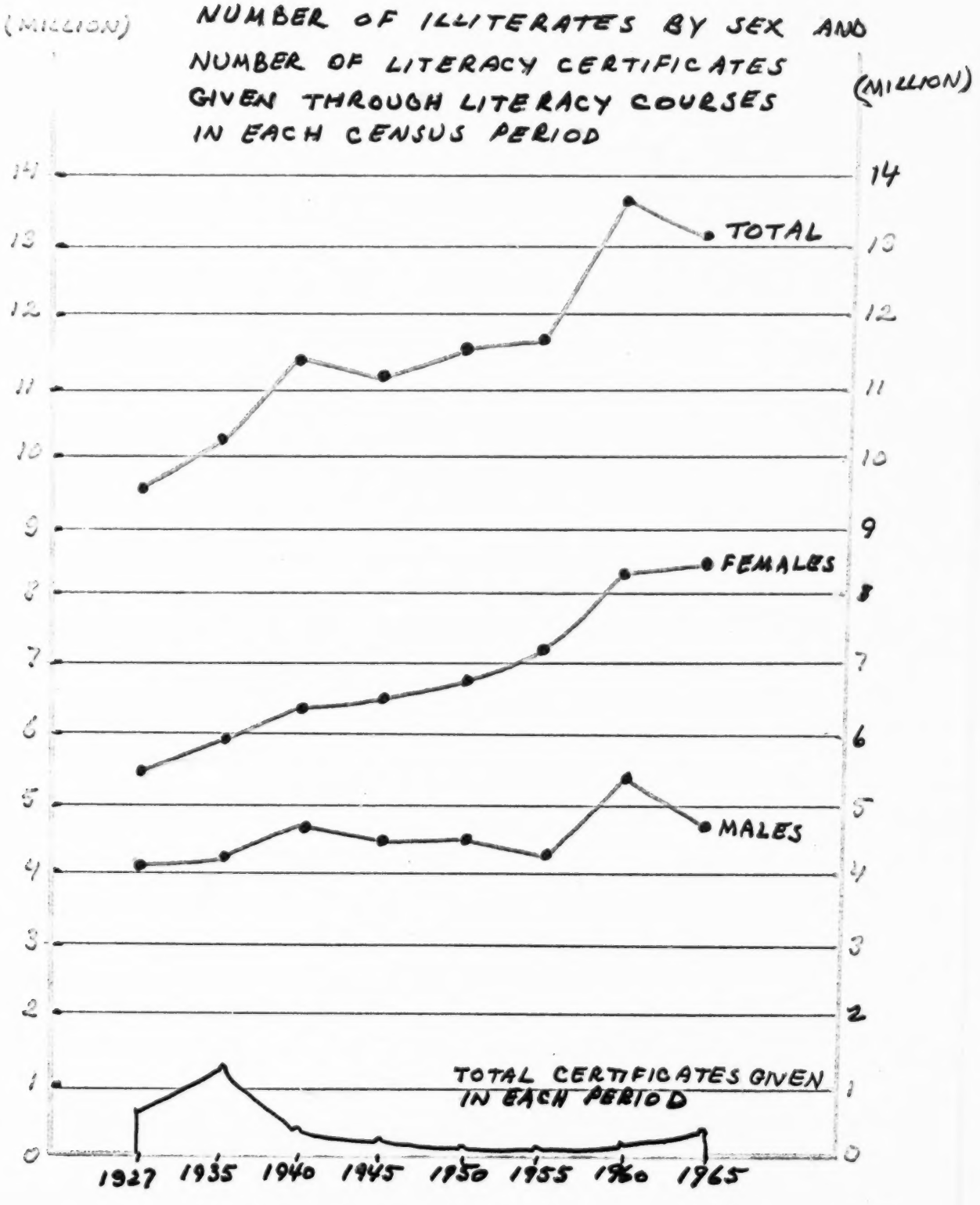

(FIGURE V)

PERCENTAGES OF ILLITERATES
6 AND OVER POPULATION
(1927-1965)




(Source: SSI)

# TURKEY




(Figure VI) (Source: SSI)

Another way to analyze the literacy is by provinces. In Turkey there are significant differences from province to province. For example, Istanbul province has a literacy rate over 75%, while Hakkari, a province in the south-east of Turkey has 12% in 1965.

According to Table VI, more than half (54.5%) of the population between the ages 14-24 have finished elementary school. In the lower age groups, the ratio of those with elementary education goes up and the difference between the sexes decreases.

Table VI

Ratio of Population in the 14-24 Age Group With Elementary Schooling by Sex (1965 Census)

| Group | Total Population | With Elementary Schooling | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total | % | Male | % | Female | % |
| 14-19 | 3,618,724 | 2,083,880 | 57.6 | 1,330,310 | 63.8 | 753,570 | 36.2 |
| 20-24 | 2,365,696 | 1,178,735 | 49.8 | 785,548 | 66.9 | 390,187 | 33.1 |
| Total | 5,984,420 | 3,262,615 | 54.5 | 2,118,858 | 64.9 | 1,143,757 | 35.1 |

Source: State Planning Organization.

Finally, according to the analysis made by the State Planning Organization, in 1965, 58.4 per cent of the 12.5 million literate population has completed 3 or 5 years of primary education, 6.7 per cent 6 years of secondary education, and 1.6 per cent two or more years' higher education. The remaining 33.8 per cent of the literates is composed of those who have not graudated from a formal educational institution.[28]

Footnotes

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